

HOW TO DEVELOP THE ABILITY OF STUDENTS TO ASSESS INFORMATION FROM MEDIA AND SOCIAL NETWORKS?



**A tool for teachers
developed with the
participation of Belarus,
Georgia, Lithuania,
and the Russian Federation**

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DEVELOPING STUDENTS' ABILITY TO EVALUATE INFORMATION FROM MEDIA AND SOCIAL NETWORKS

Toolkit for teacher training
in citizenship and human
rights education

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FOREWORD

Dear Reader

■ We are delighted to share with you the results of the joint pilot project on “Teacher training in citizenship and human rights education – how to develop the ability of students to assess information from media and social networks?” This project was carried out by representatives of Belarus, Georgia, Lithuania and the Russian Federation in the framework of “Human Rights and Democracy in Action” – a joint Pilot Projects Scheme supported by the European Union and the Council of Europe.

■ This project is particularly timely today, bearing in mind the role of the Internet and social networks in the life of society in general and in the lives of the upcoming generation in particular. The communication opportunities offered by the Internet are unlimited. It floods a user with all sorts of information, much of which is contradictory in its content and aims. The Internet is also abundant with interpretations of past or current events, which aim for the manipulation of people’s perception and in some cases for recruitment into extremist groups. By presenting such information in a way that appeals to young people, extremist movements make use of young people’s maximalism, disillusionment and their search for new and daring self-affirmation.

■ Internet dependency is on the rise among young people, and this reduces the probability that they will discuss the suggestions and temptations found on the Internet and their possible consequences with their peers or with adults. When a youngster gets involved in a social network, he or she is often overwhelmed with massive amount of facts and interpretations. It is sometimes the case, that it is only the attractive and exotic surface that is seen, but not the idea which is hidden beneath.

■ Young people need to be equipped with skills to assess information critically and to be aware of the possible outcomes of their actions. Failure to develop such skills and understanding might lead to irresponsible and dangerous decisions which could have long-term consequences. The role of a wise adviser or a tutor becomes crucial; as such a person can help young people develop the relevant skills and understanding. This role is often taken on by a teacher. Yet teachers themselves are not always adequately prepared to assess the content of the Internet and social networks.

■ It is also important to bear in mind that today the Internet is being turned into the field of political and ideological battles. Unfortunately, these fights take place not only in the Internet environment, but also in real military and ethnic conflicts, the number of which increases with frightening intensity. Racial and ethnic hostility and intolerance more often become the centre of attention. Tragic events in Ukraine, Paris and Copenhagen are vivid evidence to this fact, and they come together with rousing emotional response through the Internet and social networks.

■ While parties to any conflict are always tempted to present a one-sided interpretation, such presentations are not helpful for resolving any conflict. It is essential to promote dialogue, mutual understanding, compromise and peaceful conflict resolution. That’s why a teacher must be well prepared to equip students with skills to search and compare information on different perspectives, analyse one-sided representations and identify cases of the manipulative use of social media. The teacher must possess intercultural competence and know how to support the development of such competence among the students.

■ Developing one's intercultural competence helps to overcome one's biases. It helps to develop the understanding that all people have the right to respect of their human dignity. It helps to develop communication and cooperation with other people, which takes into account, respects and values the diversity of their cultural background. The best way of fulfilling this very difficult task is intercultural dialogue, as it implies getting acquainted with another culture and its distinct features, developing a respectful attitude towards it, and the commitment to find a common basis that would increase understanding and contribute to intercultural cooperation.

■ The pilot project "Teacher training in EDC/HRE – how to develop the ability of students to assess information from media and social networks?" is an example of such intercultural dialogue. Its representatives from Belarus, Georgia, Lithuania and the Russian Federation shared their achievements and experience, discussed problematic questions, and learnt alternative approaches and techniques for solving them. Initial caution gradually turned into trust and genuine interest in each other's challenges and achievements.

■ We all share the same common home and the quality of living in it depends on the efforts of all of us. Intercultural dialogue is the best way forward. We must learn to see what we have in common and to understand our differences, to be aware of the fact that we must make decisions together, taking into account everyone's interests and needs. Our diversity is the wealth of Europe, and the source of its creativity.

Professor Vladimir Yanchuk

INTRODUCTION

DEMOCRACY IN THE 21ST CENTURY - DIGITAL DEMOCRACY

The unprecedented influence and viability of the Internet and of social networks means our recent arrival in the 21st century has given mankind both the greatest gift and the biggest challenge - digital citizenship. The Internet has managed to bring changes which the most ardent utopists would have found difficult to imagine - boundaries of time and space, which previously served as the foundation for all existing political, educational, economic and other systems necessary for management and regulations, have become conventional. These systems are now being reinterpreted in accordance with the two parallel dimensions in which we live: reality and e-reality, the latter in itself necessitates harmonious co-existence in the world i.e. digital democracy.

— Democracy in the 21st century means that e-reality should reflect the fundamental principles of democracy in the way they are reflected in our usual, traditional reality, in as much as e-reality, with all its unprecedented and unmatched freedom and opportunities, increases the risk of violation of these principles. The availability, capabilities, and freedoms of e-reality are widely shared, necessitating a deeper understanding of human rights that consequently emerges as an inevitable challenge.

— The boundless world of the Internet, which modern man must navigate on a daily basis, increases the demand for greater and more up-to-date skills, competencies, and values. These are considered to be the main instruments in the fight against discrimination, and violence and in conflict prevention.

— This is the basis from which the main message of the modern educational systems of the world - raising digital citizens - takes its origin.

— When we talk about digital democracy and digital citizenship, in the first instance, it is necessary to accurately reflect on who is or should be a digital citizen. From the viewpoint of education, it is highly important and even necessary to reflect on what we mean – the young people we train to become digital citizens are neither “theoretical” children nor “aliens” who might one day come into existence in our world. Rather they are our own children, students with whom we come into contact every day in the classroom, whose desires, needs, emotions, joy, boredom and development we observe on a daily basis; and who are such a genuine part of our reality. But we have to admit that we are leading them into a future - a digital future that is not yet certain not only for them but for ourselves as well, as possibilities are available to mankind in inexhaustible quantities.

EDUCATION POLICY IN THE 21ST CENTURY. THE 21ST CENTURY TEACHER

We are witnessing an historical process – the existing educational-pedagogical paradigm is being changed by the frantic dynamics of the development of modern information technology, while core democratic values, such as respect for human rights and diversity, freedom of expression, participation, etc. remain the same; social networks and the Internet are becoming the most effective educational tools for education in both formal and informal settings.

— This is the biggest challenge to be faced by education policy in the 21st century - a values-based education, where digital information and the digital skills of both learners and teachers are an integral part of the educational process.

■ A heavy responsibility rests on modern teachers, who have been caught up in one of the most important technological progresses known to mankind in the middle of their careers. They need to keep pace with this progress and raise citizens equipped with all the skills necessary to deal with not only the reality, which was considered utopian until not long ago, but also to adapt to an unpredictable future, which may seem utopian from today's standpoint.

■ Therefore, those facing the biggest challenge nowadays, are teachers - Digital Immigrants, as they are frequently referred to, who have to prepare students, so-called Digital Natives for a future which will be more natural and organic for their students than for themselves. In order to avoid turning the current situation into an insurmountable problem, it is essential to constantly provide teachers with professional support to make them feel that they are not alone.

■ Today's education policy and educational standards constantly call on teachers to train not only knowledge-oriented future citizens, but future citizens who are equipped with the skills needed in the 21st century, future citizens who are able to correctly navigate in the traditional reality as well as in e-reality, guided by democratic values and attitudes. The main tools to achieve this goal are digital tools and their purposeful and active use in the classroom. This is where teachers need to be encouraged to be provided with constant training and support. Teachers should be able to properly manoeuvre the vast information space: sorting, evaluating and analysing information, and to help their students develop these skills.

CRITICAL AND ANALYTICAL THINKING IN THE DIGITAL ERA

Despite the fact that the skills needed for receiving, comprehending, analysing, evaluating and using information have always been of vital importance at all stages of the development of mankind, today their importance is considerably greater for *any* individual in terms of their *professional* as well as *personal* lives.

■ Since today, *any* individual from *any* part of the world has access to *any* kind of information, and can become an author and a disseminator of *any* information, it is necessary to enable them to research, critically evaluate and analyse information, and to prevent discrimination, show respect for diversity, for the rights of others and to preserve their identity in the boundless world of the Internet.

■ This is necessary not only for the particular individual, but is also a requirement set forth by the modern world to ensure prosperity and peaceful co-existence.

■ Why? - Because:

- ▶ On the one hand there is too much information, and on the other hand – a “user” who needs to be able to overcome information overload and select relevant “correct” information.
- ▶ On the one hand, we enjoy easy access to information and, on the other hand, there is a greater likelihood of wrong information circulating.
- ▶ On the one hand, opportunities for self-expression have increased and on the other hand sensitivity towards human rights has increased.

■ In the light of the facts mentioned above, the ability of a person to critically analyse and evaluate information has become a crucially important survival skill, and that is why it is referred to as, and ranked as, one of the basic skills of the 21st century.

■ In addition, international literacy research works done in recent years have shown that those countries which rank highly for information assessment and critical analysis are the countries which enjoy a higher degree of economic stability and growth. Since this correlation is not a mere coincidence, we can say that investments made in schools, for the purpose of helping students to develop the above mentioned skills, have guaranteed multidimensional returns not only with regard to the student's personal and professional development, but also in terms of the country's economic well-being.

EDC/HRE AND STUDENTS' ABILITY TO EVALUATE INFORMATION FROM MEDIA AND SOCIAL NETWORKS

BACKGROUND

The Council of Europe programme for Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (EDC/HRE), which aims to facilitate democratic learning, is an attempt to introduce mechanisms to prevent and combat violence, extremism, xenophobia, discrimination and intolerance through education; it is designed to facilitate cooperation between countries, to mobilise joint efforts to resolve common problems, and to promote experience-sharing practices. To this purpose, various projects are being initiated and implemented, which respond to the priorities and needs of the countries participating in these projects, and, ultimately, results not only in the participating countries gaining valuable experience, but in benefitting other countries as well, as the priorities and challenges are not only of a local nature, but are products of global processes and developments.

■ In 2013 (July-December) a project: "Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education: a diversity of approaches", was implemented within the "Human Rights and Democracy in Action" EU/CoE Pilot Projects Scheme with the participation of four Council of Europe member countries: Belarus, Georgia, Lithuania and the Russian Federation. Two main outcomes resulted from the Project:

- ▶ Research aimed to analyse and study the existing situation with respect to educational achievements and teaching methods to help students develop the skills and competencies required to live in a democratic society.
- ▶ A film bringing together good practices in the participating countries to combat various forms of discrimination in the sphere of education.

■ It should be noted that the cooperation between the countries participating in the project went beyond the frames of the project. The results of the research as well as the needs highlighted within the project were used as a basis for a new pilot project. It was discovered that the four countries participating in the project were facing common needs and challenges, which had already been noted as significant by the Council of Europe and so a new pilot project was launched: "Teacher training in EDC/HRE: how to develop students' ability to assess information from media and social networks?"

■ In order to face the above mentioned challenges and to meet the above mentioned needs, using the established methods of collecting, analysing and evaluating information, the Pilot Project - "Teacher training in EDC/HRE: how to develop students' ability to evaluate information from media and social networks?" –had for its aim:

1. To empower teachers with knowledge and skills for working in an environment influenced by media and social networks.
2. To provide teachers with an in-service training programme and the methodological tools necessary for creative work, to help students to critically evaluate media and social networks information.

■ The partner countries were represented by:

► Belarus:

The Academy of Post diploma (postgraduate) Education

► Georgia:

National Centre for Teacher Professional Development under the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia

► Lithuania:

Ministry of Education, Conflict Prevention Association

► Russian Federation:

Russian Academy for Teachers' Qualifications Improvement

■ The partner countries assessed to what extent analytical and critical competences with respect to digital information was referred to in their respective legislations, curricula, teacher training programmes and developed and piloted 3 project-lessons on topical contextual issues:

► *Belarus:*

1. Multicultural education in the system of interaction between educational institutions and the media;
2. Cultural adaptation and social integration of migrants and refugees;
3. Preventing online youth violence.

► *Georgia:*

1. Intercultural communication;
2. How to use the Internet to promote antidiscrimination?
3. Hate speech.

► *Lithuania:*

1. The culture of online communication, its violations and consequences;
2. Online information: can one really believe all the information published online?
3. Internet control and censorship: oppression or necessity?

► *Russian Federation:*

1. Intercultural education;
2. Voting online;
3. Financial literacy.

■ The research conducted by each country on the topics chosen for them and the practical project-lessons prepared and performed on the topics, appeared to be interesting not only for the representatives of these countries, but also became a valuable resource for the representatives of other countries. This is certainly one of the positive outcomes of the Project which will help enhance the cooperation and experience-sharing among the countries.

LEGISLATIVE REGULATIONS, NORMATIVE ACTS, CURRICULUM

In order to guarantee that the measures are effective and tailored to needs, a survey of the participating states' legislative regulations, normative acts and curriculum was planned within the project.

■ At first glance, the educational systems of each of the four countries are based on well-organised, national legislative regulations harmonised with the recommendations issued by international bodies in charge of education. The topics chosen in the framework of the pilot project: education for democratic citizenship, development of the skills required for evaluation of digital information, critical analysis, and the use of ICT, proved to be very high priority for the legislative systems of all four countries.

BELARUS

Values, goals and normative fundamentals of the development of students' ability to assess information from media and social networks are defined in the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus, the Code of the Republic of Belarus on Education, Laws of the Republic of Belarus "On the Rights of the Child", "On Information, Digitalisation and Information Protection", "On the state youth policy in the Republic of Belarus", "On the Fundamentals of Activities on Crime Prevention", "On the Prevention of Child Neglect and Juvenile Delinquency", the Criminal Code, the Code of administrative Offences, on the Concept and Programme of the continuous education of children and youth in the Republic of Belarus.

The development of the communication and information competences of students is carried out during both classroom and extra-curricular activities in educational institutions. In the secondary education institutions, the development of students' competencies is carried out in the process of studying such academic subjects as "Information Technology" (VI-XI classes); "Introduction to school life" (I-IV classes); "Man and the World" (I-V classes); "Social Science" (IX-XI classes); "World History" (V-XI classes); elective classes of "Fundamentals of Life Safety" (II-IX classes).

In the Vocational education and Secondary special education institutions the necessary competences of students are formed and developed in the process of studying such academic subjects as "Information Technology", "Social Science", "World History", "Fundamentals of Law".

In addition, the educational institutions of Belarus offer students a number of extra-curricular activities and programmes.

GEORGIA

Along with the law on "General Education" and the National Education Goals of Georgia, the national curriculum is a priority document, the main legal foundation for the school system in Georgia. Among the core competences defined by the National Curriculum priority is given to media literacy and digital literacy. The Georgian National Curriculum is currently being revised, and this process, together with other priority areas, aims at expanding "digital literacy". The core competence of "digital literacy" implies the development of the skills required for dealing with Internet information, "behaviour" management in social networks and exercising freedom of expression. One of the main directions of digital literacy is "digital citizenship", which implies raising informed, ethical and law-abiding individuals equipped with the skills required for the effective use of technology. Great importance is attached to the fact that not a single but a variety of disciplines provides the development of digital literacy in students. The purpose of this is to help students develop the following skills:

- ▶ understanding
- ▶ communication
- ▶ analytical thinking
- ▶ synthetic thinking
- ▶ creative thinking
- ▶ critical thinking

Besides the revision and refinement of the National Curriculum, revision of the general professional standards for teachers is planned for the year 2015, in order to properly reflect all the core competences envisaged by the National Curriculum. Alongside other important changes, each teacher's direct responsibility to help students develop literacy, media literacy, digital literacy, critical and creative thinking, social competence, etc. within the subject they are directly responsible for, will be defined in an even more focused, purposeful and determined manner.

The codes of ethics are commonly referred to as an important regulatory document in schools in Georgia in addition to the National Curriculum and professional standards.

The codes of ethics for teachers, school principals and students are presented in the form of three independent documents, which help schools create a positive working and learning environment. They are prepared in the form of recommendations, and aim at protecting the rights of students, as well as of teachers and school principals, and to free schools from political and religious propaganda, all forms

of violence and discrimination. It should be noted that students, teachers and school principals actively participated in the preparation process for the codes of ethics.

■ Alongside all the documents mentioned above, we should highlight the fact that in 2014, the Parliament of Georgia approved the law on "Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination". The law is one of the most important legal instruments for prevention and elimination of discrimination in different educational and social institutions and in the public at large.

LITHUANIA

■ Lithuanian general education programmes for secondary schools and general education standards highlight the need to develop students' skills in analysing information. Hence, the need to integrate the analysis of information covered by mass media into the educational process. Among these standards, Social Education is identified as a separate area; it is regarded "as an integral part of the subject on Global Cognition, based on historical and geographical knowledge about the environment as well as national, ecological, economic and civic education." Nonetheless, the activities of mass media are not identified as one of the possible areas to be analysed at school. General education programmes and general education standards set the objective of developing "the ability to collect information about the living environment from simple available sources of information, to absorb and comprehend new information as well as to make the best possible use of the acquired knowledge and experience."

■ In Lithuania, some of the schools organise additional classes for their students, with the aim of familiarising young people with the basic principles underlying the analysis of media-generated content and evaluating how the same content could be presented through different media channels, for example, TV, press, radio and online media. Such classes are believed to help achieve the objective identified in general education programmes, namely to help students develop the skills in analytical thinking and critical evaluation. It should be noted that the classes, during which students are introduced to the activities of mass media, are optional and as such are not included in the compulsory course of secondary education.

■ The legislative framework in Lithuania ensures the protection of minors from negative or erroneously conveyed information. More specifically, this sphere is regulated by the Law on the Protection of Minors against the Detrimental Effect of Public Information, the Law on Provision of Information to the Public and the Law on Advertising. However, students in secondary schools are not provided with consistent information about the provisions embedded in the above mentioned laws. As a result, not all students are aware of their rights and obligations in cyber space. The Civil Code of the Republic of Lithuania provides for the possibility of individuals to defend their honour and dignity in court and to claim for compensation for both material and non-material damage.

■ Moreover, the students creating mass media content should be aware that any behaviour in cyber space, inciting others against any national, racial, ethnic, religious or other groups of people, is forbidden by law and incurs liability under Article 170 of the Penal Code of the Republic of Lithuania.

■ The quality of public information in Lithuania is ensured by the Law on Provision of Information to the Public, the Law on the Protection of Minors against the Detrimental Effect of Public Information and other legislation enforced in the country as well as the Lithuanian Code of Ethics for Journalists. The ethics of advertising is regulated by the Code of Conduct for Advertising of the Republic of Lithuania. However, public information, depending on its content may also be evaluated by the State Consumer Protection Office, Equal Opportunities Ombudsman's office, an independent voluntary association - the Lithuanian Advertising Bureau - and the courts.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

■ Education of the young generation in the Russian Federation is based on the tradition of democratic citizenship and represents an important goal of the Government as well as of society. Education policy is based on the following basic documents:

- ▶ The Constitution of the Russian Federation
- ▶ Federal Law on "Education in the Russian Federation"

■ The Constitution of the Russian Federation proclaims the primary responsibility of a State to be the respect and protection of human rights. The new Federal Law “On education in the Russian Federation” determines the main principles of educational policy as:

- ▶ Humanistic education;
- ▶ Priority of life and health for human beings;
- ▶ Rights and freedoms of the individual;
- ▶ Self-esteem, diligence, citizenship, patriotism, responsibility, legal culture, environmental friendliness;
- ▶ A unified educational environment within the territory of the Russian Federation;
- ▶ Protection and development of ethno-cultural features and traditions in a multinational State.

■ The National educational initiative “Our new school” is very important in creating democratic citizenship. This initiative provides main directions and main characteristics of the national educational policy. The key characteristic in a new system of continuous education is “not only the transfer of knowledge and technology but also the forming of a creative competence, a readiness for retraining”. This characteristic successfully provides such important civic qualities as activity, demanding initiative, readiness for multicultural dialogue, creative thinking and finding innovative solutions, respect for the national history and historical traditions, pursuit of State development.

■ Nowadays the new Federal state educational standard (FSES) is being used throughout the Russian educational system. The Federal state educational standard has been introduced into the state educational policy as an innovative initiative within the existing global challenges in the areas of multiculturalism, extremism and fundamentalism, also inclusive democracy, increasing competition in the economic sphere, etc.

■ It is important to note that federal involvement in law-making on civic education matters has encouraged the development of a regional legal base for civic education. According to federal legislation and the normative base of civic education development, various laws, concepts, and programmes were signed in several regions of the Russian Federation. Legal documents were also created at local government level. Accordingly, the civic education policy of the Russian Federation includes normative documents approved at federal, regional and municipal levels.

■ Great attention in the work of civic education is given to Internet technologies. The educational environment in school is moving rapidly towards the Internet. The use of the Internet for educational purposes enables the formation of a positive method of socialising for students, the preparation for solving practical problems, the choice of a “virtual” social environment. It also allows a significant increase in the visibility and availability of educational material through the use of additional information with a high degree of relevance; to take control of students’ knowledge or training in preparation for the final assessment in the form of computer-based testing; and to facilitate the work of the teacher in the preparation of the lesson outlines, etc.

TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMMES, PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

The survey of the participating states’ legislative documents shows that well formulated legislative documents with clearly identifiable important content are not sufficient to ensure the educational process is risk-free and driven in the right direction. In order to avoid the risk of the regulatory framework for education being merely a formal document, whose role does not extend beyond passive consumption, the learning process should be conducted by a facilitator i.e. a teacher equipped with the appropriate skills and able to lead students in the right direction to achieve the projected results.

■ The four partner states participating in the Pilot Project pay significant attention to the professional development of teachers, seeing this as the main guarantee towards helping students develop various skills. In order to guarantee the relevance of the professional development programmes to the key topics of the project, the programmes were examined in each country.

BELARUS

■ Here particular attention is paid to the professional development programmes and educational and training courses for teachers. The Academy of Post Diploma Education implements educational

programmes of refresher courses and retraining for education managers and specialists in the subject of interaction between educational institutions and the media.

- Advanced training in full-time and distance learning is carried out on the following topics:
 - ▶ “Effective use of modern information technologies in educational activities”;
 - ▶ “Formation of media-literacy of teachers and students”;
 - ▶ “Cloud services and electronic resources in teaching practice”;
 - ▶ “Technologies of the development of critical thinking of the educational process participants”;
 - ▶ “Use of information and communication technologies in the process of multicultural education”;
 - ▶ “Formation of intercultural information competence of the educational process participants”;
 - ▶ “Methods of organising distance learning in heterogeneous groups”;
 - ▶ “Implementation of the peer-to-peer learning approach in educational institutions”;
 - ▶ “Internet resources in socio-psychological support of aggressive children and adolescents”;
 - ▶ “Improvement of work on social integration and adaptation of students who are in social danger”;
 - ▶ “Provision of legal and scientific-methodological and information to support activities aimed at the protection of the rights and legitimate interests of children from families of migrants and refugees.”

■ During the retraining courses teachers can use online games which contain basic concepts of the structure of the Internet, the rules for working on it, the “netiquette” (net etiquette). The game «Wild Web Wood» (<http://www.wildwebwoods.org>) is based on the handbook of the Council of Europe “Internet literacy”.

■ In addition to professional development training programmes, teachers have access to a variety of resources for their professional development:

- ▶ The most important resource is the site of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus (<http://minedu.unibel.by>), which contains a detailed catalogue of the official Internet resources of the Republic of Belarus, the official information resources of the educational system of the country, as well as the list of media sites under the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus.
- ▶ The National Legal Internet Portal of the Republic of Belarus (<http://www.belta.by>) – this is the major state information resource of the global computer network in the field of law and legal digitalisation. This portal contains the texts of legal acts of the Republic of Belarus as well as legal, scientific, practical, educational, reference and other information in the field of law and legal digitalisation.
- ▶ The Belarusian national educational web portal (<http://www.edu.by>) contains information for teachers, students and parents on various aspects of education. It contains information about the legal basis of pedagogical activity, interaction of educational institutions and the media. The site includes a list of programmes for extra-class activities for students, as well as programmes for additional education for children and youth. The website contains regulatory documents, programmes, manuals, methodological developments. On the national education Internet portal there are forums “Communicate online”; “Learn online” (distance learning); call centre “Ask online”; Media Library “Watch online” which contain electronic versions of textbooks and manuals that contribute to the development of the abilities of teachers, students and parents to properly evaluate the information in the media, the Internet and social networks.
- ▶ The children’s legal site (<http://mir.pravo.by>) – created for children and adolescents aims to help them get legal knowledge, answer some “adult” questions, give advice in difficult situations, talk about the legislation of the Republic of Belarus and the rights of the citizens of our country. To achieve the goal, all legal information on this website is presented in an amusing and accessible manner, including some game situations. The site also contains information for children and young people about the use of Internet resources and social networking.
- ▶ The website of the Academy of Post diploma Education (<http://www.academy.edu.by>) contains information on professional development, retraining of executives and specialists in the sphere of education. It offers a variety of topics and forms of teacher training. The site includes information resources: normative legal documents, manuals, methodological elaborations, and media materials, multimedia presentations, films, videos, Internet materials, and distance learning resources. The site contains information on international cooperation in the field of education, including programmes and projects of the Council of Europe.
- ▶ In addition to the above mentioned and dozens of other useful Internet resources, there are other forms of media, which actively respond to the issues of human rights, democracy, multicultural

education and tolerance. There are topical TV shows and TV reports favouring the development of young people's skills to evaluate the information in the media and social networks objectively and properly.

- Finally, teachers have access to a variety of professional newspapers, magazines and radio programmes aimed at raising students' as well as teachers' awareness of innovations and initiatives introduced, resources provided and recommendations issued in the sphere of education, at local as well as international levels.

GEORGIA

■ As is the case with the Republic of Belarus, the role of the Georgian state is not limited to establishing a statutory framework and identifying the responsibilities and goals to be achieved by teachers.

■ The education system of Georgia is trying to keep pace with the challenge of the era. This implies equipping schools and teachers with material and technical capabilities (Internet access for schools, providing all elementary school teachers and students with notebooks/personal computers etc.), as well as with appropriate instruments (publications, training, education, recommendations, etc.).

■ The state offers free training courses for teachers in Information and Communications Technologies (ICT), along with the existing professional training courses and the teacher training courses for teachers of different school subjects. Georgian public school teachers can participate in the training.

■ The training course in Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) is designed to:

- Raise teachers' qualification and improve the learning environment by integrating Information and Communications Technologies (ICT);
- Promote the establishment of a digital culture in schools by activating the resources of the teachers trained in Information and Communications Technologies (ICT), by assisting them to consistently use their potential, knowledge and skills in practice, as well as by ensuring the involvement of school principals in the process;
- Establish e-ethics;
- Develop Georgian e-learning resources and promote their use for the purpose of integrating Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) in the learning process.

■ Training is conducted in two areas, firstly for elementary then secondly for basic level school teachers. Elementary school teachers are involved in one to one e-learning; the process involves providing all first grade students and their teachers with personal computers equipped with special educational games and programmes. These teachers are provided with multistage cyclical training in order to ensure their continuing professional development. Training for basic level teachers involves differentiated learning, individualised learning and project-based learning. After the training courses, teachers get involved in the process of coaching, creating digital resources, model lessons, projects, and sharing them with their colleagues.

■ The offer of free training courses for teachers is still in force, because it positively affects students' academic performance. There are about 60 000 teachers in Georgia, the ranks of which are being reinforced by newly trained and qualified teachers on a daily basis.

■ The state also offers a free online library (www.buki.ge) and Georgian video guides to students and teachers for the purpose of developing their ICT competence and improving learning process: www.ict.tpdg.ge

■ In addition to training courses, the state supplies all public schools in Georgia with supplementary professional resources for teachers. Each school library receives at least 2 publications ensuring teachers' professional development. These publications include EDC/HRE manuals. For the purpose of the overall implementation of the EDC/HRE programme, when once all public schools are equipped with the full package of EDC/HRE publications, it is desirable to plan training courses for teachers based on these EDC/HRE publications.

■ The online newspaper "Mastsavlebeli" "/Teacher/" (www.mastsavlebeli.ge), together with supplementary printed material, represents a very important supplementary professional resource for teachers and others involved in educational processes. The online newspaper supplies teachers, school personnel, parents and students with important resources regarding learning processes on a daily basis with clear educational objectives.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

■ Like the other partner countries, the Russian Federation places great emphasis on training teachers in accordance with the legislative regulations adopted at federal, regional and municipal levels.

■ Furthermore, close attention is paid to the Internet, as an instrument used in the sphere of education for resource formation purposes as well as for the purpose of dealing with various tasks. The Russian Federation has established an information database, which is a marker in obtaining information regarding academic and extra-curricular activities. For example: Collection of digital educational resources (DER) for occasional use in the educational process. This is a Web portal containing collections of digital objects or links to Web resources, peer-reviewed and recommended for use in lessons or as additional material.

■ Examples of DER collections:

- ▶ United collection of digital educational resources <http://school-collection.edu.ru> ;
- ▶ United window for access to educational resources <http://window.edu.ru> ;
- ▶ United catalogue of digital educational materials for pupils www.indigos.ru. System testing to assess the level of knowledge and skills of students. This is a computer based test that allows control of students' knowledge or training in preparation with a view to the final assessment. Some of these resources enable teachers to create the desired tests.

■ Examples of testing systems:

- ▶ Yandex - the Unified state exam <http://ege.yandex.ru> ;
- ▶ The grading system "Infotest" <http://infotest.by> ;
- ▶ Single portal of online testing in education <http://www.i-exam.ru>

■ Together with various subject-related Internet resources, educational-methodological literature on the publishers' site provides additional educational opportunities. The web sites of publishers are primarily designed to inform consumers of the availability of printed and online products, produced by any publisher or media. These materials can be useful for individuals, teachers, and students as a source of information about new educational and methodological literature. In addition, a number of publishers provide open access to their materials (or part of them) free of charge. Examples:

- ▶ The Drofa publishing house (<http://www.drofa.ru>);
- ▶ Publishing house "BINOM. Knowledge laboratory" (<http://www.lbz.ru>);
- ▶ "1C" - educational software (<http://obr.1c.ru>);
- ▶ Publishing house "September" (<http://1сентября.рф>);
- ▶ Free popular science magazine in 3D technologies (<http://mir-3d-world.w.pw>).

PROBLEMS, CHALLENGES, RESULTS

As can be seen from the information above, the Pilot Project partner countries have the legislative bases and regulatory tools which meet the objectives of the Project. In addition, the countries are actively implementing the programmes and organising training courses aimed at the professional development of teachers.

■ However, the results of the studies carried out within the framework of the Project show that despite the clear legislative regulations and intensive professional development programmes, considerable amounts of work still need to be carried out at school to raise students' and teachers' awareness of the issues connected with discrimination and equality and for the development of analytical thinking. The results also show that actions carried out and measures taken are often insufficient, and they only slightly modify the severity of a problem, as both local and global processes can lead to aggravation and proliferation of these problems.

■ Against the background of this given situation, teachers represent a professional group, in need of constantly updated professional tools bridging policy and practice to raise their awareness about, and help them to properly respond to the current challenges. The professional development activities should be planned to enable teachers' immediate and concrete intervention in the problem solving processes, and develop their confidence and competences to make it part of their everyday practice.

■ The pilot trainings have shown that teachers often have a limited perception of the challenges faced by citizenship and human rights education due to the misuse of digital information. For example, a project lesson aiming to identify forms of online hate speech and means to prevent discrimination revealed that teachers have a relatively vague understanding of what hate speech is and of its consequences. Accordingly, the activities carried out and trainings conducted within the project have shown that problem-oriented educational resources or activities immediately result in the development of the skills of the teachers, as well as those of the students.

■ In addition, it should be noted that the involvement of students in the design, piloting and evaluation of the professional development programmes for teachers was very well perceived: 90% of the teachers involved in the project mentioned students' participation as one of the main strengths of the project.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- ▶ The analysis of the evaluation of the pilot trainings organised and carried out within the framework of the Project revealed that complex and important topics like discrimination, violence, intercultural issues, etc. are of high importance to and the subject of interest of both students and teachers. The experience showed that students and teachers were highly motivated to be engaged in the working process.
- ▶ The feedback from the pilot training participants showed that schools are in demand of strategic and “simple” methods to facilitate working on above-mentioned complex issues within the school environment. These are: practical tools for teachers and detailed instructions for project-lessons which provide opportunity for practicing and developing the most important key skills in the classroom environment.
- ▶ Pilot training participants properly understood the significance of the proposed training lessons. Already during the piloting phase, they began to plan the means and ways for applying the offered resources in their respective schools. In addition, 80% of the participants informed their colleagues about the content of the training as soon as they returned to their schools.
- ▶ The success and productivity of educational systems undoubtedly depends on legislative regulations and elaborated curricula, but these alone are not enough to achieve direct results. The analysis carried out in the legislative regulations on education of the participating countries showed that well-formulated legal documents do not often reflect school practices and cannot solve the problems faced by schools.
- ▶ The countries participating in the project actively implement teacher training programmes, but the pilot training carried out within the project confirmed that the professional development programmes for teachers should address the problem and should be specifically focused on problem-solving.
- ▶ Problem-solving training activities should be systematic and frequent. Teachers should be supplied with constantly updated professional instruments.
- ▶ Students should be involved in training activities to ensure that their perspective is taken into consideration in the definition of and the solutions to the problems.
- ▶ In today’s world it is impossible to educate a modern citizen without modern instruments. Schools should incorporate the possibilities offered by e-space – this means that it is part and parcel of a modern person’s daily life and schools should try to turn it into an integral part of their everyday learning practices.
- ▶ The development of students’ skills to critically evaluate and analyse information, to be able to express themselves and to respect other people’s rights is the foundation for not only their own personal and professional success, but also for the prosperity of a democratic society.
- ▶ Democratic citizenship and non-discrimination should be further encouraged as the more freedom we enjoy, the higher the risks are of human rights violations.

APPENDICES (LESSONS)

The appendices include one lesson per country as contextual examples for encouraging students to critically assess digital information.

— The lessons designed and piloted within the frames of the Pilot Project directly reflect the priorities and problems faced by each partner country.

BELARUS

— **Title of the lesson:** Online violence

— **Theme:** Prevention of online youth violence

— **Keywords:** online violence, cyber bullying, prevention of online violence.

— **Objectives:** to arm students with skills to counter online violence, for developing students' ability to evaluate information on violence found in the media and social networks.

— **Expected results:** Students' awareness about forms of cyber violence is raised, analytical and critical competences are strengthened, and the ability to develop a counter narrative to / to prevent online violence is reinforced.

— **Required materials:** stickers, projector, photos, videos, cards signed as "Director", "Deputy Director", "Social Educator", "Educational Psychologist", "Children's Officer", "Medical Officer", "Teacher", "Representative of a non-governmental organisation", "Mother Sidorova", "Father Sidorov", "Mother Petrenko", "Father Petrenko."

Outline of the lesson

— Introduction

1. Presenters welcome the participants
Good afternoon! We are pleased to meet you! Today we will talk about different forms of violence on the World Wide Web and about ways of preventing violence on the Internet.
2. The presenters and the participants announce the rules of group work (the rules are written on the board).
3. Game for getting acquainted "Online Dating"

— Presenter:

You have decided to find a friend (a pleasant companion). To this end you put an advertisement on the Online Dating page. Tell people a little about yourself (what you like to do, your hobbies, and what you are fond of, your strong points and your weak points). There is no need to write your real name, you can use a pseudonym (nickname).

Stickers are distributed among the participants, they write ads and the stickers are posted on the board. You need to give the participants time to study the stickers of their peers on the board.

Main Part

1. The presenters acquaint the participants with the different types of violence against children in cyberspace.

Forms of violence against children in the cyberspace:

▶ **a. Grooming** (*solicitation via the Internet*) – establishing contact with a child and gaining his/her confidence with the aim of involving him/her in future sexual contact.

Malicious people tend to get acquainted with children in forum or chat spaces. Usually, these people are familiar with the way young people live their lives today (interests, tastes, preferences) and are easily able to start a conversation with a child. They look for youngsters who are disappointed in some way or dissatisfied with their life, and are looking for support and understanding. They sympathise with such children, try to reassure them and then offer to communicate in a more closed environment (private messages in social networks, e-mail, SMS). Gradually they progress to discuss intimate topics and questions. Then they usually propose to meet in the real world.

▶ **b. Bullying** (*intimidation, harassment: actions which frighten, degrade and have a negative impact on children*).

This is the most common form of violence among adolescents. Children create Internet sites and groups within social networks that are dedicated to marginalised children. They post photos and videos, which compromise the victim, spread rumours, send anonymous messages with threats and insults. In some cases, this bullying can be videoed or filmed and the materials uploaded onto network sites for all to see.

▶ **c. Dissemination of pornographic materials** (*materials with sexually explicit or violent scenes which are damaging to children's psychological and physical health*).

Most teens who have seen sexually explicit materials on the Internet feel restlessness and anxiety. In addition to that, watching pornography can have various consequences:

- may provoke dependence on pornography;
- may increase the need of watching it;
- may provoke the tendency to imitate the scenes.

▶ **d. Production and distribution of child pornography.**

Child pornography is one of the most profitable (and well-paid) types of criminal activity. The production and distribution of child pornography is punishable by law in Belarus. Article 343-1 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Belarus "Production and distribution of pornographic materials or items of pornographic nature depicting a minor" (up to 13 years of imprisonment).

2. Broadcast of a video clip (an excerpt from the talk show "Position Social Networks"). Each participant should name one of the forms of violence seen in the clip, comment on the situation and, if possible, give another example.

3. The presenters acquaint the participants with forms of cyber mobbing (according to Nancy Willard's classification (Willard, 2007)):

- ▶ **Flaming** (*insult*). Usually occurs in an open public space of the Internet, through offensive comments, vulgar addresses or remarks.
- ▶ **Harassment** (*Deliberate, systematic cyber-attacks from strangers, users of social networks, people from the nearest real social environment*).
- ▶ **Denigration** (*rumour-mongering*). Intentional distribution of information regarding the victim not looking at her best through the publication of photo / video materials on the Internet, fora, newsgroups, via E-Mail text, aimed at the destruction of friendship or revenge.
- ▶ **Outing and Trickery** (*public disclosure of personal information*). Distribution of personal information, such as intimate photos, financial position, occupation in order to humiliate or blackmail.

- ▶ **Exclusion** (*social isolation*). Exclusion from the Instant-Messenger group, gaming community, etc.
- ▶ **Cyber stalking** (*continuous harassment and persecution*). Systematic (sexual) harassment of anyone, followed by threats and harassment.
- ▶ **Cyber threats** (*open threat of physical violence*). Direct or indirect threats to kill or injure someone.

4. Game: "Council for prevention"

The Council for prevention of child neglect and juvenile delinquency is a self-governing body, which considers information on juveniles at risk or those who have committed illegal acts. The Council for prevention involves the headmaster, teachers, students, parents, representatives of public associations.

Each member of the audience receives a card with the name of their role for the game from the presenters. Roles: "director", "deputy director", "social educator", "educational psychologist", "juvenile inspector", "medical officer", "teacher", "representative of the public association", "mom Sidorova", "Dad Sidorov", "mom Petrenko", "dad Petrenko". The participants who don't get cards are appointed Supervisors and monitor prevention tips, noticing flaws and successful solutions.

The Council for prevention begins with the "director" reading out the situation. Then each participant talks about his role, gives the characteristics of the families (parents and children).

Situations are real and taken from the following internet sources:

1. http://www.academy.edu.by/files/29052013_Profilaktika.pdf
2. <https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/>
3. <http://ont.by/tv/projects/pozition>

Names and geographical locations have been changed.

Case study: "An emergency occurred in a school. A pupil in form 7, born in 2000 brought a smoke bomb into the school. He had made this by himself based on information he had found on the Internet. During the break the pupil handed the bomb to his classmate who put it in his pocket. During the lesson there was an explosion emitting smoke. The incident resulted in no injuries, but the children were forced to leave the class urgently. The explanatory note written by the owner of the bomb was that he had been "interested in the various tricks" for a long time and he liked to "manufacture such pyrotechnic articles." He obtained all the necessary information from the Internet. His parents were interviewed by the police."

Final part

Summary and reflection

"Give Advice"

Each group offers a few tips to help the prevention of online violence. The first group gives advice for high school students while the second group advises parents. The third group offers advice to teachers while the fourth group advises younger students. The fifth group meanwhile gives tips to moderators (system administrators) of Internet sites.

GEORGIA

Title of the lesson – AntiDiscriMedia

Theme: Anti-discrimination.

Keywords: anti-discrimination, acceptance, tolerance, empathy, minorities, human rights, equality, marginalisation, violence.

Objectives: Promoting anti-discriminatory practice, developing the skills of acceptance of diversity, using ICT in the learning process.

■ **Expected outcomes:** Students will develop skills enabling them to accept diversity, as well as the skills of identifying and preventing discrimination. Using social media students will be able to share their ideas and their work both with their school community and with a broader community as well. Students will develop reading and writing skills, as well as visual literacy, information retrieval and sorting skills.

■ **Materials:** Computer connected to the Internet, stationery, library resources, video camera, etc.

■ **Work Plan:**

- ▶ To prepare students – classroom discussion on the meaning and forms of discrimination;
- ▶ To use various resources during the discussion in order to provide complete information about discrimination - films, texts, photos, legal documents, magazines, studies, etc;
- ▶ Classroom discussion about the role of media / electronic media in the context of discrimination;
- ▶ The active phase of the working process:
 - To create a blog or a webpage on an electronic media named ANTIDISCRIMEDIA - cooperation with IT teacher if needed;
 - To divide students into groups – each group works on a specific social group at risk of discrimination (e.g. religious minorities, sexual minorities, persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities, etc.);
 - To collect information by groups;
 - To create a resource/product on the selected issue;
 - To analyse/assess information/works and post them on the ANTIDISCRIMEDIA web-page.
- ▶ To present the project beyond the classroom – in school or with students, teachers of different schools/classrooms or with the community or parents;
- ▶ To facilitate a joint discussion to summarise the entire work and its results.

■ **Instructions:**

- ▶ The teacher invites students (from 3rd grade to 12th grade) to draft an anti-discrimination law, or to describe a case of discrimination, or the general anti-discrimination principles and values.
- ▶ Once students are more familiar with the topic, the teacher offers them the opportunity to create a special page or a blog on the Internet - AntiDiscriMedia (anti-discrimination + social media) to combat discrimination and raise other people's awareness; thus the students become media specialists fighting against discrimination in the realm of the social network.
- ▶ At the next stage the teacher and the students hold discussions to identify vulnerable groups in society i.e. the most common victims of discrimination. The class is then divided into working groups according to the identified vulnerable groups. Each group of students choose one of the vulnerable groups, identified to be the *most frequent victims of discrimination* (for example, religious minorities, sexual minorities, persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities, etc.).
- ▶ The groups of students start working on their topic. They collect information in various forms: written, as well as video, audio and any other form of material. They may **make a short film** as well. The students work as media specialists to protect the rights of specific groups of people.
- ▶ The work continues throughout the semester, or even throughout the academic year. The students, in collaboration with the teacher and school clubs, create, explore, and sort the information. Then, with the help of their teacher, they publish the information on their AntiDiscriMedia page.
- ▶ The groups of students present the results of their work to those students working in the other groups and try to bring these results to the attention of the public outside the classroom. Internet media serves as a medium for providing the public easy access to the information. Students may also give presentations attended by invited guests and hold discussions with them on issues of interest to them.

LITHUANIA

■ **Title of the lesson: Online information: can one really believe all the information published online?**

The main objectives:

■ To develop a critical approach to online information; to have the ability to identify the impact exerted by various interest groups on mass media and to encourage the comparison and analysis of various sources.

■ To draw students’ attention to possible contradictions between the freedom of information and a person’s right to privacy. To present to students the problematic issue of publishing controversial information: for example information about the victims of crimes, tragic technological events or natural disasters. To initiate a discussion about the justification and ethics related to the publication, or non-publication of certain information which could incite national, racial or confessional tension.

■ **The main objectives for students:**

- ▶ To develop the ability to distinguish between the main types of Websites by the nature of information published on them and the names of persons or organisations publishing the information; to identify the intentions of information providers and to be aware of the ways they could seek to influence the impartiality of information.
- ▶ To be aware of the main criteria which could help understand and check the safety and credibility of any given Website and the value of information published on it.
- ▶ To understand the basic moral principles, which might help to determine whether the information published in cyberspace would serve the public well, without prejudice to the interests of an individual person.
- ▶ To become familiar with problematic situations which might arise when publishing online information related to the victims of crimes, tragic technological events and natural disasters, historical facts about the consequences of wars, genocide and confessional conflicts; to develop one’s ability for critical thinking and taking a firm position on the above mentioned issues.

Type of schooling	Level of schooling	Subject
2 lessons, or 1 seminar for teachers	Grades 10 – 12.	Citizenship education, Information technologies

A short description

■ The lessons are aimed at analysing the credibility of online information and the publication of information, the disclosure of which could be harmful to personal privacy. At the same time, cases of publishing on the World Wide Web statements or visual material which might result in controversial public reaction are discussed; students are encouraged to voice and further develop their moral standpoint on such matters. It should also be emphasised that in the age of information technologies every person can potentially create media content. Subsequently, his/her role and responsibility increases significantly.

■ During the analysis of recommended and other accessible sources, it is advisable, side by side with theoretical information, to initiate discussions and encourage students to express their opinion; it would also be recommended to raise questions which do not have right or wrong answers and to train them to make decisions on their own. During the first lesson, the most popular types of Websites and the groups of interests behind them are analysed; emphasis is placed on the possible impact of such Websites; on the quality and impartiality of information, and ways of identifying credible information sources are discussed. During the second lesson, the conflict between the aim to publish authentic and detailed information, on the one hand, and the necessity not to harm specific persons nor provoke societal conflicts and polarisation, on the other hand, is presented.

Key words

■ Information, responsibility, interest groups, credibility, authenticity, conflict.

Methodology and ways of presenting information

■ Theoretical lecture, case studies, resource analysis, discussion, team work, role-plays.

Resources used

■ A computer with Internet connection and a projector, printed hand-outs of the texts being analysed, questionnaires developed specially for schoolchildren, paper and pens to make comments and prepare project drafts.

Duration

■ The first lesson lasts 45 min.

■ The second lesson lasts 45 min.

Lesson 1: To what extent can one trust the information published online?

The main objective

■ To promote awareness that online information is posted by individuals and organisations that have their own interests, aims and abilities - they might be motivated by dubious aspirations. To develop students' skills in checking the authorship, quality and credibility of such information; looking for alternative sources in order to compare them. To develop students' skills in identifying obvious interest groups, known for publishing a certain type of information, and the ability to adequately understand the aims advocated by them; to promote the ability to tell the difference between facts and interpretation.

Methodology

■ Theoretical lecture, case studies, resource analysis, discussion, team work if there are sufficient computer work-stations.

Resources used

■ Theoretical knowledge about the typology of online Websites, with part of the statistical information presented orally and in addition, the key statements and facts displayed on a projector screen. The assignments for teamwork are presented as printed hand-outs. Students are expected to form mini teams and complete these assignments in the computer room, analysing and identifying the online Websites indicated to them.

Instructions / lesson plan

■ The lesson could be started with an introduction about internet resource typology, the aims of information providers, definition of target groups and basic knowledge about the level of safety and credibility required. Resource No 1 (types of online Websites) – see Appendix - could be used for this analysis, by demonstrating specific examples of online Websites and highlighting the most important features characterising them.

■ During the presentation of Resource No 2 (the ability among students in the UK to select online information) – see Appendix - it would be advisable to compare the available statistics with the attitudes prevailing among the schoolchildren in our country – by asking how they assess their skills, by identifying the statements they agree with, and indicating those about which they hold different views. In the meantime, the teacher provides detailed comments on any issues which are still vague and highlights the methods for selecting reliable information.

■ In the second part of the lesson, it would be highly appropriate to distribute hand-outs of questionnaire No 1 – see appendix – and provide comments on it (Assessing Website credibility). At the same time, it would be advisable to present a list of several Websites advocating different views, which the students are expected to analyse. It is recommended to include at least a couple of examples of Websites, characterised by a good level of quality and credibility, such as personal, educational, non-governmental, news-related, commercial, etc.

■ Upon completion of the assignment, team representatives should be asked to act as rapporteurs and present their conclusions. They are expected to substantiate the decisions and identify the criteria underpinning their conclusions. The teacher should provide feedback by highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of these conclusions.

Lesson 2: Should the truth be published in any event?

The main objective

■ To present a topical problem which is caused by an ever-increasing use of information technologies, namely, the conflict between the public's constitutional right to information and an individual's right to privacy. To provide relevant knowledge about a set of moral criteria and standards, which have to be adhered to prior to publishing information about the victims, the nations, social and religious groups exposed to persecution. To initiate discussion about information which should be published and the (self) imposed limits on publishable material.

Methodology

■ Theoretical lecture, case studies, demonstration of examples, resource analysis, conversation, discussion, role play, assuming the roles of a 'prosecutor and attorney'.

Resources used

■ The theoretical information is provided orally; some information which is easy to understand and read is shown on the projector screen; the texts of the resources designed for more detailed analysis are printed and handed out to the schoolchildren. Students can use their notebooks/workbooks to make comments or record any information related to the relevant text.

Instructions / lesson plan

■ At the beginning of the lesson, it is highly advisable to emphasise that the technological advance of digital cameras and mobile telephones and an increasing social media coverage, means any schoolchild can quite unexpectedly turn out to be a reporter by taking a picture of a car accident or a fire with the victims visible or by making a visual recording of an assault or burglary. However, prior to posting this 'hot' news and making it public, one should consider the possible consequences for the victims in question. It is also worth considering after-effects, such as children being exposed to pictures of the dead or of wounded victims.

■ After the introductory part, it could be desirable to comment on Resource No 3 (Code of Journalist Ethics) – see appendix – with special focus on both the right and obligation of information providers. Among the obligations is the requirement to make sure that the information published does not cause serious and inevitable damage to the people concerned. This could be followed by the analysis of the table "Obligations when publishing information online", comparing the obligation "to report the truth" with the obligation "to avoid damage" and identifying any possible contradictions. The teacher could make relevant comments and then seek possible solutions together with the students.

■ In the second part of the lesson, it should be advisable to focus on moral aspects, e.g., which historical visual material would be ethical to publish and which material, if published, would be considered an immoral act. The following questions could be asked to start the discussion:

- ▶ If someone-publishes a picture or a visual recording reflecting instances of a totalitarian regime or aggressive ideological history, does that mean that the person professes the same views and values?
- ▶ Are pictures of massacre, fraternal graves or disintegrated bodies necessary to have an objective picture of a certain historical period, or do they desecrate the memory of the dead?
- ▶ Is it permissible to distribute visual material online which makes fun of the people who represent another nation or religion? How can we possibly tell the difference between light-hearted mockery and jesting and offensive and provocative content? Does everybody understand the line between them in the same way?

■ It is recommended to ask several students to prepare for debates simulating a mock trial. They would represent two teams, those of "For" and "Against" and provide substantiated arguments.

■ Furthermore, special emphasis should be placed on the following issue: what is the ultimate aim and benefit of distributing such images? Is it possible to change something so that the situation moves in a positive direction through the demonstration of such images? If it is not possible, what is the point or

benefit of making such information public in Cyber space? To facilitate the discussion, it is recommended to display a picture similar to the one showing refugees and discuss the ideas reflected in it.

■ Before giving the assignments to students, it should be explained to them that some of the questions raised do not have straightforward and indisputably correct answers. The questions are intended to provoke a diversity of opinion. However, a certain consensus summarising the views and opinions should be expected by the end of the lesson.

Appendices

■ Resource No 1

Types of Web sites

- ▶ **Personal Home Pages** - maintained by individuals for content of a personal nature. Social networks such as Face book, Linked In provide us with technical opportunities. However, the person him/herself is responsible for the quality of information such as its accuracy, completeness and objectivity. Topics cover a wide range of issues such as details of domestic life or evaluation of political events, commercial advertising of a small business or artistic self-expression.
- ▶ **Special interest sites** - maintained by non-profit organisations or activists dealing with special issues, such as environmental concerns, human rights, education, charity or social care. They can be relatively mainstream or radical in interests and vary widely in credibility of information. Special interest sites are, by their nature, biased. When using such sources, your readers should be aware of the source's special interest. Therefore, it should be noted that the level of correctness information varies enormously.
- ▶ **Professional sites** - maintained by authorities, institutions and organisations. They are often specially designed to bring information together from diverse sources in a uniform way, such as the portals of the government, local authorities, international and national authorities or educational institutions. Such sites usually comply with the legislative requirements and publicity standards, with unambiguous references to the original sources and authors cited. The credibility of the institution or professional credential of the individual providing the facts gives clues as to the reliability of the information.
- ▶ **News and Journalistic sites** - these include national, international news, online newspapers, magazines, and "home-grown" Web publications. Anyone can publish his or her own "news," on the Web. They could be electronic versions of existing and widely recognised newspapers, journals or news agencies. However, they can be newly created products, available only online. From a technical standpoint, it is relatively easy to create a news site. The challenge is to gain popularity and maintain the reputation of being an objective information source. The credibility of such news sites is judged by how often it is quoted by other popular and trustworthy media.
- ▶ **Fora** – a specialised type of Website, aimed at promoting discussions. Their visitors share both opinions and experience on a variety of topics. The very fact that they are accessible to anybody upon registration in order to express individual opinion about the topics they are concerned with means that a variety of opinions can be expected in such fora. On the other hand, the administration of such a forum can block certain comments; remove any dissenting statements and even entire topics at their discretion.
- ▶ **Commercial sites** – "are naturally biased in favour of their own products, so watch out for inflated claims for performance and quality. Although many legitimate businesses have Websites, some are not legitimate. Companies, with good and bad reputations, are in the business of making money and acquiring and keeping customers. Companies will not showcase their competitors' products. Many entrepreneurs use "rented" Web space to create their own Web sites to sell their services or products - buyer beware!" Beware of the commercial sites of unfair businesses!

Based on and quoted from: *Criteria to Evaluate the Credibility of WWW Resources.*// Virginia Montecino, George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia: <http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/web-eval-sites.htm>

Resource No 2

The ability of students aged 9 – 18 to select online information (the United Kingdom)

- ▶ 95% of students use Internet-based information for their homework assignments.
- ▶ 48% of parents believe that their children are more digitally fluent than their own generation.
- ▶ 38% of students trust most of the Web-based information; 49% trust part of the Internet-based information, whereas 10 % tend to distrust the information online.
- ▶ Only a third of the students aged 9 – 18 received some guidance at school on how to discriminate between credible and unreliable information published online.
- ▶ Less than one in ten Internet users aged 12 – 15 take time in trying to find out who created the Website containing the information they seek.
- ▶ Beauty counts more than quality – 15% of students under this age group tend to think that the high-quality and attractiveness of a Website design would guarantee credibility of information it contains.
- ▶ Only 17% of students are interested in searching for information, comparing the data from different sites.
- ▶ About a third of the students believe that if a Web site's search engine ranks high, e.g., occupies a high position in Google search results, the information it contains is likely to be credible.
- ▶ The students are likely to have more trust in informative and news portals (87%), educational Web sites (88%), than personal web pages and blogs (48%).

Based on: *Truth, Lies and the Internet. A report into young people's digital fluency.* // Jamie Bartlett, Carl Miller. September 2011. http://www.demos.co.uk/files/Truth_-_web.pdf

Questionnaire to be used during the first lesson

Assessing the credibility of online sources such as Web sites

1. Who is the person who created the Website, wrote an article or posted a comment? How does he/she introduce him/herself – by indicating the first and last name and the position occupied, by merely indicating a nickname or maybe the comment was posted anonymously?
2. Does the individual who posted information provide you with an opportunity to get in touch with him/her in order to verify the information? It could be a regular or an e-mail address, a telephone number or some other means of communication.
3. What else could be found on the Web about the individual who published information online? In what way is he/she related to the topic or events in question? What else has he/she accomplished in this particular sphere? How long and how regularly has he/she been posting similar information on the Web?
4. Is the individual who published online information a private person or is he a member of some non-governmental organisation, public authority or research institute?
5. Which public sources of information does he/she refer to? Are the persons, places and dates referred to in an accurate way?
6. If a source of information claims that he/she belongs to a certain famous organisation enjoying a good reputation, check whether a person (bearing such a name and occupying such position) is truly entered into the official Web site of that organisation. For example, if somebody claims that he/she is a reporter of Reuter's agency, his/her name should be included in the list of Reuter's journalists.
7. If a person introduces him/herself as a researcher and an outstanding professional of a certain sphere, check the list of books published by him/her, the articles published in the most prestigious scientific journals in that particular sphere and peer reviews about them.
8. Make sure that the domain name is in line with the nature of the Site. Domains *.com, *.org, *.net can be acquired by any private person. Governmental organisations will not use such domains to publish their information. If a site using such an address makes an attempt to publicise official information it is hardly credible.
9. Is the nature of the information published in line with the nature of the Website? It would be strange to come across random scientific articles in a Website specialising in entertainment. Likewise, it would be strange to find excerpts from the Law on Taxes in a personal home page. This information could turn out to be true but it's important to double-check its credibility. Comparison with other sources could help verify such information.
10. Are there any other signs indicating a biased approach in the information or the author's attempt to impose his/her opinion, e.g., promotion of the product he/she is describing, selection of biased arguments in order to impose a personal opinion or political views?
11. To what extent is the published information new or outdated? Is it still topical for the reality of today?

Based on: Truth, Lies and the Internet. A report into young people's digital fluency. // Jamie Bartlett, Carl Miller. September 2011. http://www.demos.co.uk/files/Truth_-_web.pdf

Resource No 3

Journalists' Code of Ethics

- ▶ **Article 9:** When requesting information, the journalist has to identify him/herself, specify the editorial staff and his position as well as warn the individual that his/her words may be published in mass media.
- ▶ **Article 12:** Before publishing the information obtained from an individual under stress, shock or in a helpless position, the journalist and public information organiser must ensure that the publication of such information will not violate the rights of the individual and make efforts to foresee any likely negative impact on him/her.
- ▶ **Article 14:** The journalist and public information organiser should not use for direct quotation audio and video recording devices, if the private informant is opposed to it.
- ▶ **Article 21:** When publishing information about criminal acts, accidents and other cases when material or non-material damage is caused to individuals, the journalist or public information organiser should take care not to cause additional suffering and pain with such information to the victim and innocent parties.
- ▶ **Article 37:** The journalist and public information organiser shall uphold the presumption of innocence. An individual may be accused exclusively on the basis of an effective judgment or ruling of a court.
- ▶ **Article 41:** Personal data of a victim of a criminal act shall not be published without the victim's consent or, if the victim is killed, without his/her relatives' consent. This information may be published without the consent of a victim or his/her relatives exclusively in cases when the victim is a public person or when publishing such data is in the public interest.
- ▶ **Article 47:** The journalist and public information organiser shall not abuse pictures of catastrophes, traffic accidents, deaths, assault or aggression that may hurt the feelings of the persons concerned or their relatives likewise the sensibilities of readers and/or spectators.

Journalists' Code of Ethics, adopted during the General Meeting of Journalists and Publishers, held in Vilnius, Republic of Lithuania, on 15 May 15 (Lith. *Žurnalistų etikos kodeksas*). <http://Izlek.lt/index.php?lang=1&sid=381&tid=329>

Table for the second lesson:

Obligations when publishing information online	
To report the truth	To avoid harm or damage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ To inform the public at large ▶ To protect freedom of information ▶ To use the original sources of information ▶ To ensure provision of impartial information ▶ Not to distort or oversimplify facts without a reason ▶ To provide a context of the events in question ▶ To specify who provided the information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ To publish lawful and ethical information ▶ Not to post information inciting aggression, violations of public order or criminal activity ▶ Not to overindulge in images of natural disasters or tragic technological events, death, violence or war ▶ Not to cause additional suffering and pain to the victim and innocent parties. ▶ Not to forget the presumption of innocence

Assignment for the second lesson

Refugees

After a display of this or any other picture having similar content, a list of the following questions should be handed out to the students:

- ▶ Is this image true to life, does it reflect the truth?
- ▶ Is this picture informative or insulting?
- ▶ What might be happening outside the frame of the picture? What could a broader context be?
- ▶ Who took this picture? Where and when was it taken?
- ▶ What is the message of this or similar pictures?
- ▶ Who could the target audience of such pictures be? Who could it intend to address?
- ▶ Could a picture like that help in any way the people shown in it?
- ▶ Could any other, possibly more neutral, picture be used to pursue the same objective?



Based on: <http://graphics8.nytimes.com/images/2011/09/18/books/review/18HARI/18HARI-articleLarge.jpg>

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Title of the lesson: Business game «Megalopolis» as a school network of future voters - Development of competences working with media (for students of 8th and 9th grade in secondary schools)

Theme:

- ▶ Modern school as a platform for education for democratic citizenship and human rights through the use of new information technologies.
- ▶ Modern education includes the development of skills to work with digital data, to access information critically and to participate in decision making.
- ▶ Education for democratic citizenship is inextricably linked to forming the culture of future voters and of key social competences adopted by the Council of Europe — the ability to take responsibility, to take part in group decision making, to resolve conflicts non-violently, to participate in the maintenance and improvement of democratic institutions.

■ **Key words:** democratic elections, election technologies, critical thinking, critical analysis of pre-election programmes, online election technologies, adequate information.

■ **The aim of the game :** to intensify the process of transferring to students practice-oriented knowledge and skills in the field of election technologies; to consolidate the conscious awareness of the need to participate in local community life; to develop the competences of using modern electronic resources and services.

■ **The objectives of the game:**

- ▶ The practical training of the participants in the use of modern elective technologies;
- ▶ To empower participants as active and conscious citizens with real rights and duties towards the local community;
- ▶ To promote democratic values by encouraging students to become active citizens; encourage activities and public support of educational institutions and children's public organisations that run civic education programmes with children and youth;
- ▶ To foster a positive image of active citizens, local communities, children's public organisations.

■ The lesson is conducted in the school with an educational online community. The Internet provides a modern mechanism to achieve individual and group goals based on relationships and the exchange of information. The Internet enables communication and social interaction between individuals, groups and organisations for educational and developmental purposes.

■ The organisation of educational network communities should be structured to allow students to comfortably interact and take part in dialogue. In fact, the educational network community allows participants (pupils, students, teachers, administrators of educational institutions) to move from the position of recipient to the position of actor.

■ "Megalopolis" can be implemented on any existing website of an educational institution with "Poll" and does not require additional resources.

■ The game "Megalopolis" has a broad pedagogical potential with regard to the development of critical thinking skills, as the election procedures involve active communication between candidate and voters who need to be able to critically interpret information in order to make the right choice in voting.

■ This emphasis on critical thinking is the basis of the "School voter" lesson, which is an integral part of the technology game "Megalopolis".

Instructions:

■ Students are given the roles of residents of the city who will have to choose the Mayor of the city (class).

■ Students are divided into small groups of residents of a commune who have to:

1. Delegate one person onto the city election commission, to agree on a decision protocol. This person will represent the interests of the residents of the commune (small group) during the election campaign;
2. Select one candidate for the position of Mayor of the city in accordance with the requirements of the Election Commission (EC);
3. Prepare the candidate's election programme to be presented to the citizens of the city during the election campaign;

■ The main objective of each of the communes (small groups) is to effectively conduct an election campaign. The target audience for the election includes only the citizens of "Megalopolis". To achieve this objective each delegation must:

1. Register their candidates in the EC and get official permission to conduct the election campaign;
2. Form the headquarters of the election campaign and develop its strategy and tactics;
3. Hold a press-conference for the candidates for the position of City Mayor;
4. Start campaign activities by making maximum use of existing resources;
5. Hold cultural events in support to the candidates, using free time and platforms in the city (school or children's health centre grounds).

■ The outcome of the election campaign is a popular vote in which the city residents elect the Mayor, using the «Megalopolis» game portal (<http://www.mmgame.ru>)

■ After registration of the candidates, the campaign activities can start. But first each election head-quarter has to develop its election campaign strategy.

■ The main electoral tasks are:

1. The **preparation of a curriculum vitae** (formatted as a resume with photo) for the candidate and its publication on the «Megalopolis» game website. This material helps to acquaint the voters with the candidate in simple terms. It should emphasise the qualities of the candidate as a person and as a leader, to indicate their main achievements and life plans. Voters can get acquainted and evaluate the information.
2. **Holding a press-conference.** This involves expressing opinion in front of large audiences by replying to the questions of the press and other mass media members. The press-conference is usually the first opportunity to find out about the personality of the candidate. The press-conference is carried out on-line. Participants receive information in a question-answer format.
At the press conference, the candidate presents him/herself, with an emphasis on his/her leadership and organisational experience; his/her interests, and how they enjoy filling leisure time, etc.
The candidate will also explain the reasons for his participation in the election campaign and present the benefits he can bring if elected as Mayor.
3. **Participation of the candidates in TV debates.** Candidates debate topical issues with representatives of other electoral parties in front of a video camera in web-format. These discussions provide an opportunity to emphasise the differences in point of views, as well as their similarities, if any. The TV debates can focus on a special topic determined in advance. For example, the topic of "School Student Self-Government: current problems and solutions."
4. **Rally of the candidates.** This is designed to appeal directly to a large audience enabling the candidates to present their programmes and to convince the audience that they have the necessary skills to implement their policy statements using in a limited timescale. The optimal time for the speech is about 2-3 minutes. This form is emotional in nature and requires dynamism. Every member of the candidate's election headquarter can speak at the rally. Rallies are carried out on-line.
5. **The candidate's programme.** This is the most informative part of the campaign, as the programme allows a presentation in detail of the key ideas that the candidates are going to implement in the event that they are elected. In «Megalopolis» there is a contest of election programmes in which candidates to the position of Mayor are invited to design a programme for the development of the city. The competition takes into account the quality of the work, its relevance, the originality of the proposed ideas, the abstract reasoning.

■ Thus, the technology game "Megalopolis" is the school network for future voters. Participants will be ready to take active part in all the major election procedures, having already experienced democratic elections.



ENG

www.coe.int

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.